

## Message Text

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60

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W

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P R 092040Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9046

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT OF SPAIN 0886

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PROP, TD, US, CU

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH STIMULATES MILD PRESS FUROR

1. I UNDERSTAND THAT AN AMERICAN WIRE SERVICE IS CARRYING REPORTS OF CRITICISM HERE OF A PUBLIC SPEECH WHICH I MADE RECENTLY IN PORT OF SPAIN. FOR DEPARTMENT'S INFORMATION, SUMMARY OF THIS NON-INCIDENT FOLLOWS.

2. ON MARCH 30 AT THE INVITATION OF ST. AUGUSTINE KIWANIS CLUB, I INFORMALLY PROVIDED AN INTRODUCTION TO A FILM ON THE AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL AT THEIR DINNER MEETING IN THE PORT OF SPAIN HOLIDAY INN. A BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENT HAD APPEARED IN THE PRESS INDICATING THAT I WOULD SPEAK AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE PRESS WERE PRESENT. MY TEN-MINUTE INFORMAL REMARKS FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON WHAT THE BICENTENNIAL MEANT TO ME. IN THE PROCESS I NOTED THE CENTRAL ISSUE OF PEACE IF MANKIND IS TO ACHIEVE ITS GOALS. IN THIS CONNECTION, I BRIEFLY RESTATED SEVERAL THEMES THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY HAVE HIGHLIGHTED. PROMINENT PRESS COVERAGE IN BOTH DAILY PAPERS MARCH 31 FOCUSED ON THIS LATTER ASPECT.

3. KEY QUOTATIONS FROM MY REMARKS FOLLOW: "PEACE CANNOT SURVIVE HIGH-HANDED, DELIBERATE EXPLOITATION OF  
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EXPLOSIVE LOCAL CONFLICTS FOR UNILATERAL POLITICAL OR

MILITARY ADVANTAGE. WE BETRAY FREEDOM'S FUTURE IF WE STAND IDLY BY WHILE HUGE EXPEDITIONARY FORCES AND VAST AMOUNTS OF WAR MATERIAL ARE SENT TO IMPOSE OUTSIDE SOLUTIONS IN LOCAL CONFLICTS ON FAR-AWAY CONTINENTS. WE DARE NOT BE INDIFFERENT IF A NATION OF THIS HEMISPHERE MAKES IT A SYSTEMATIC PRACTICE TO INTERVENE AND EXPLOIT SUCH CONFLICTS AROUND THE GLOBE, OR EVEN WORSE AMONG ITS NEIGHBORS. ALL PEOPLE MUST BE ABLE TO MAKE THEIR OWN CHOICES; DECIDE THEIR PROBLEMS FOR THEMSELVES WITHOUT THREATS OR INTERFERENCE FROM OUTSIDERS. I WANT TO GO ON RECORD, HERE AND NOW, AND REAFFIRM ONE BASIC FACT: THE UNITED STATES IS DETERMINED TO RESIST SUCH DANGEROUS AND IRRESPONSIBLE ACTIONS. WE MUST STAND TOGETHER IN PROTECTING THE PEACEFUL ORDER OF OUR HEMISPHERE. UNQUOTE.

4. ALTHOUGH I DID NOT MENTION CUBA BY NAME, PRESS HIGHLIGHTED COMMENTS AS WARNING TO CUBA. GUARDIAN HEADLINE WAS: "WARNING TO CUBA REPEATED IN TRINIDAD", AND EXPRESS BANNER READ: "FIGHT FOR PEACE, ENVOY URGES TRINIDAD". PUBLICITY WAS SUBSEQUENTLY EXTENDED BY STATEMENT ISSUED BY BARRISTER SELWYN RICHARDSON CRITICIZING MY STATEMENTS AS AN "INSULT" TO THE TRINIDADIAN SOVEREIGNTY AND CALLING FOR AN APOLOGY. THE DAILY "GUARDIAN" APRIL 5 RAN RICHARDSON'S STATEMENT PROMINENTLY AT THE TOP OF PAGE ONE UNDER HEADLINE: "PNM LAWYER ATTACKS U.S. ENVOY". RICHARDSON IS A PROMINENT LOCAL BARRISTER WHO HAS BEEN POLITICALLY ACTIVE IN THE RULING PEOPLE'S NATIONAL MOVEMENT (PNM) PARTY AND IS A MEMBER OF ONE OF THE PNM GENERAL COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEES. HE IS NOT KNOWN TO BE PARTICULARLY INFLUENTIAL WITHIN THE PARTY, HOWEVER.

5. THE PRESS SOUGHT MY REACTION AND I PROVIDED A BRIEF COMMENT NOTING THAT PERHAPS MY STATEMENT HAD NOT BEEN READ IN ITS ENTIRETY, AND THAT THE THRUST OF MY REMARKS WERE MERELY INTENDED AS A REAFFIRMATION OF THE VALUES OF PEACE AND MY CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO THOSE VALUES. TWO OPPOSITION PARTY LEADERS ALSO SPOKE OUT TO CRITICIZE RICHARDSON'S ATTACK AND INDICATE SUPPORT FOR MY REMARKS. SENATOR CAPILDEO OF THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY (EAST INDIAN/CONSERVATIVE) STATED THAT HE COULD SEE NO

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JUSTIFICATION FOR RICHARDSON'S CRITICISM AND CHALLENGED RICHARDSON TO DEBATE THE QUESTION. SAMPAT MEHTA OF THE UNITED FREEDOM PARTY (MINSCULE) AND ALSO A BARRISTER CALLED RICHARDSON'S STATEMENT A "BRUTAL FRONTAL ATTACK" ON A FRIENDLY NATION'S ENVOY AND URGED THE PRIME MINISTER TO DISAVOW THE REMARKS LEAST THEY BE INTERPRETED AS REFLECTING PNM POLICY.

6. THESE VARIOUS COMMENTS PROVIDED FRONT-PAGE PRESS TREATMENT AGAIN APRIL 6 WITH THE ADDED ADVANTAGE THAT THE GUARDIAN PUBLISHED THE ENTIRE TEXT OF MY REMARKS AT THE KIWANIS DINNER. SUBSEQUENT THERETO, THERE HAS BEEN NO FURTHER MEDIA ATTENTION.

7. COMMENT: THIS PUBLICITY FLURRY AT NO TIME APPROACHED THE DIMENSIONS OF AN "INCIDENT". MY COMMENTS WERE CAREFUL AFFIRMATION OF U.S. POLICY AND INDEED SINCE PUBLICATION OF FULL TEXT OF MY REMARKS A NUMBER OF CALLERS HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR WARM ENDORSEMENT. AT NO TIME HAS THERE BEEN ANY OFFICIAL REACTION FROM THE TRINIDAD GOVERNMENT, AND FOREIGN MINISTER POINTEDLY DECLINED TO COMMENT WHEN SOUGHT OUT BY THE PRESS FOR A STATEMENT.FAY

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